

## Making Waves to Deliver Your Message

# 7 Steps to Successful Email Marketing

Email marketing allows you the flexibility that television and radio spots, magazine and billboard advertisements, and direct mail do not allow on a tight budget. With email, you can personalize each message to speak directly to your specific audience, test and make instant changes to your messages, track results, and evaluate effectiveness immediately. Take the following seven steps to reach success with your email marketing.

- 1. The Rules:** Get the facts before you mail. Familiarize yourself with the CAN-SPAM rules and regulations, the techniques used by successful marketers, and what the different email services offer in order to plan and deliver a strategic campaign and avoid being treated like spam.
- 2. The List:** Always ask first. A permission-based list of your ideal prospects is a must-have for success in email marketing. Get permission to send your messages to your targets by using a sign-up form on your website or in your place of business. Send an initial email asking permission to send your marketing messages and to be placed on their preferred list. If your prospects are expecting your messages, they're less likely to treat your messages as spam.
- 3. The Message:** Make it worth their time. Your prospects want information they can use. Follow an 80/20 rule when composing your messages. Devote 80 percent of your message to providing useful information your prospects will benefit from and limit promotion of your products, services or requests for support to no more than 20 percent of the email content. This will keep your readers engaged and interested in receiving your messages. With email marketing, you can tailor your messages to the different segments of your audience and address recipients by name for better responses.
- 4. The Subject Line:** Grab their attention. Your subject line is the introduction for your message. Use it to compel your recipients to open your mail. Speak to their specific needs or concerns and pique their interest. Keep it short, 50 characters or less, as this is proven to increase open rates. Avoid spam keywords that are automatically filtered by many email servers. Words like free, money, win, degree, gift, deal, sign-up and survey are commonly caught by spam filters and can prevent your audience from ever seeing your message.
- 5. The Design:** Excite the senses. With your audience's in-boxes are filled with boring text heavy messages, you have an opportunity to stand out with a creative design. Visual graphic elements help to make your message exciting and will engage your readers. Use graphics to tie your messages in with your web design and branding to create a cohesive marketing campaign.
- 6. The Vehicle:** Go with a pro. Utilize a proven email marketing service or an email marketing specialist, like Pure Talent Graphic Design, to design and deliver your messages. A pro will provide you with features and benefits like unique designs, easy delivery, list management, creative graphics and the detailed reports needed to track your success.
- 7. The Follow-up:** Evaluate the reports. After you send your first mailing, you'll have immediate access to statistics that will help you evaluate your results. The reports will give you valuable information, such as how many of your recipients successfully received your message, how many and who opened it, who clicked on which links, who forwarded your message, and who, if anyone, unsubscribed. Analyze this information and find clues for making any necessary changes and improvements to your future campaigns.